CLAIMS

1. A wireless communication handset, comprising:

a housing;

a blade rotatably coupled to the housing, the blade rotatable in a plane;

a rotary encoder having a first encoder portion coupled to the blade and a stationary encoder portion,

the rotary encoder having a first active mode function output when the blade is in the first position,

the rotary encoder having a second active mode function output when the blade is in the second position.

2. The wireless communication handset of Claim 1, the wireless communication handset performing a first active mode function in response to the first handset active mode function output of the rotary encoder, the wireless communication handset performing a second active mode function in response to the second active mode function output of the rotary encoder.

3. The wireless communication handset of Claim 2, the first active mode function of the wireless communication handset is a flash function, the second function of the wireless communication handset is a mute function.

4. The wireless communication handset of Claim 1, a processor coupled to the rotary encoder, an audio output device coupled to the processor, a first audio output signal of the processor coupled to the audio output device when the blade is in the first position, a second audio output signal of the processor coupled to the audio output device when the blade is in the second position.

5. The wireless communication handset of Claim 1, a processor coupled to the rotary encoder, a tactile output device coupled to the processor, a first tactile output signal of the processor coupled to the tactile output device when the blade is in the first position, a second tactile output signal of the processor coupled to the tactile output device when the blade is in the second position.

6. The wireless communication handset of Claim 1, first and second blade position indexing members disposed on the housing in alignment with the first and second positions of the blade.

7. The wireless communication handset of Claim 1, the blade rotatable through an angular range, the first and second blade positions separated by an angle within the angular range.

8. The device of Claim 1, the rotary encoder having a third active mode function output when the blade is in a third position, the rotary encoder

having a standby function output when the blade is in a fourth position, the wireless communication handset performing a third active mode function in response to the third handset function output of the rotary encoder, the wireless communication handset operating in stand-by mode in response to the fourth handset function output of the rotary encoder.

9. The device of Claim 8, the blade substantially overlapping the housing in the fourth position, the blade rotated approximately 180 degrees between the fourth and first positions, the third position of the blade between the first and fourth positions, the second position of the blade between the fourth and first positions substantially opposite the third position.

10. A wireless communication handset, comprising:

first and second rotatably coupled housing portions,

the first and second housing portions rotatable in corresponding first and second substantially parallel planes;

the wireless communication handset in a standby mode when the first and second housing portions are rotated to a standby angular configuration,

the wireless communication handset in a call mode when the first and second housing portions are rotated from the standby angular configuration to a call angular configuration,

the wireless communication handset performing a first function when the first and second housing portions are rotated to a first function angular configuration between the standby and call angular configurations.

11. The wireless communication handset of Claim 10, the wireless communication handset performing a second active mode function when the first and second housing portions are rotated to a second angular configuration between the standby call angular configurations.

12. The wireless communication handset of Claim 10, the first and second housing portions are at least partially overlapping in the standby angular configuration, the first and second housing portions are separated by approximately 180 degrees when the first and second housing portions are in the call angular configuration.

13. The handset of Claim 10,

a rotary encoder having a first encoder portion coupled to the first housing portion and a second encoder portion coupled to the second housing portion,

the rotary encoder having a standby mode electrical output when the first and second housing portions are in the standby angular configuration,

the rotary encoder having a call mode electrical output when the first and second housing portions are in the call angular configuration,

the rotary encoder having a first function electrical output when the first and second housing portions are in the first function angular configuration.

14. The wireless communication device of Claim 13,

a processor,

the standby mode electrical output of the rotary encoder coupled to the processor when the first and second housing portions are in the standby angular configuration,

the call mode electrical output of the rotary encoder coupled to the processor when the first and second housing portions are in the call angular configuration,

the first function electrical output of the rotary encoder coupled to the processor when the first and second housing portions are in the first function angular configuration.

15. A wireless communication device operable in active and standby modes, comprising:

a housing;

a rotatable member rotatably coupled to the housing,

a rotary encoder having a first encoder portion coupled to the rotatable member and a stationary encoder portion;

the rotary encoder encoding a first active mode function output when the rotatable member is positioned in a first position relative to the housing and the wireless communication device is not in the standby mode,

the rotary encoder encoding a second active mode function output when the rotatable member is positioned in a second position relative to the housing and the wireless communication device is not in the standby mode.

16. The device of Claim 15, a processor, the first active mode function output of the rotary encoder coupled to the processor when the rotatable member is in the first position, the second active mode function output of the rotary encoder coupled to the processor when the rotatable member is in the second position.

17. The device of Claim 15, rotatable member position alignment members disposed on the rotatable member and the housing portion.

18. A method in a communication handset having a blade rotatably coupled to a housing, comprising:

transitioning the communication handset from a stand-by operating mode to an active operating mode by rotating the blade in a plane relative to the housing from a standby mode position to an active mode position;

invoking a first function of the communication handset by rotating the blade to a first position different than the active mode and standby mode positions;

transitioning the communication handset to the stand-by mode by rotating the blade to the standby mode position from some other position.

19. The method of Claim 18, invoking a second function of the communication handset by rotating the blade to a second position.

20. The method of Claim 19, indicating the position of the blade relative to the housing by providing a physical sensation when the blade is the respective positions.

21. A wireless communication handset, comprising:

first and second rotatably coupled housing portions,

the first and second housing portions rotatable in corresponding first and second substantially parallel planes;

the wireless communication handset in a first operating mode when the first and second housing portions are rotated to a first angular configuration,

the wireless communication handset in a second operating mode when the first and second housing portions are rotated to a second angular configuration,

the wireless communication handset in a third operating mode when the first and second housing portions are rotated to a third angular configuration.